



ALL-STAR SQUADRON

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NO. 17
JAN.

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

THIS COURT
HAS FOUND YOU
GUILTY--

--AND SENTENCES
YOU TO BE
DESTROYED!



JOE
KUBER

IS HE MAN-OR MONSTER?
**THE TRIAL OF
ROBOTMAN!**



**WHERE
THE
ACTION
IS!**

1942--A WORLD AT WAR! AND AGAINST THE FORCES OF AXIS DARKNESS, THE MIGHTIEST HEROES OF EARTH--TWO HAVE BANNED TOGETHER AS THE

SURE YOU CAN'T DROP BY ROBOTMAN'S LAB FOR A CUP OF COFFEE, WONDER WOMAN?

WE AMAZONS NEVER TOUCH THE STUFF, JOHNNY.

ALL STAR SQUADRON

BUT THEY'RE ABOUT TO DISCOVER THAT NOT ALL THE VERMIN ON THIS TROUBLED PLANET ARE WEARING SWASTIKAS...!

RIGHT! IF NOT FOR HIM, NUCLEAR MIGHT'VE GOTTEN AWAY--AND WE'D STILL BE COMBING THE VIRGINIA HILLS WITH A MAGNETIZED COMPASS!

BESIDES, I WANT TO LOOK IN ON STEVE TREVOR AT THE MILITARY HOSPITAL IN WASHINGTON.

GIVE HIM OUR BEST--AND TELL HIM TO KEEP 'EM FLYING!

TO SLAY THE BODY ELECTRIC!

"THE MACHINE YES THE MACHINE NEVER WASTES ANYBODY'S TIME NEVER WATCHES THE ROSEMAN NEVER TALKS BACK."

--Carl Sandburg
"The People, yes" (1932)

SPECIAL THANKS TO CARLA CONWAY FOR A BIT OF EXTRA LEGAL ADVICE

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YOU MEAN INSTEAD
OF VACATIONING IN
QUEENS, GARDEN
SPOT OF METRO-
POLITAN NEW
YORK?

JOHNNY,
PLEASE! AFTER
ALL, WE'RE ROBOT-
MAN'S GUESTS.

HE'S ALREADY DOWN
IN THE MOUTH, WITHOUT
YOU RUNNING DOWN
HIS NEIGHBORHOOD.

DON'T LET THE SNIANTER BETWEEN
JOHNNY QUICK AND LIBERTY BELLE
BOTHER YOU, ROB.

THEY TEND TO FOR-
GET YOUR MECHANICAL
EARS CAN PICK UP
THEIR WHISPERS.

WHEN THEY'RE
RIGHT, STEEL,
THEY'RE RIGHT.

MY ROBOT JAW
MAY BE MOLDED
INTO A SEMI-
PERMANENT
SMILE--

--BUT I HAVEN'T
HAD A TRULY HAPPY
MOMENT SINCE MY
BRAIN WAS GRAFTED
INTO THIS GLORIFIED
ERECTOR SET.

WE'VE GOT A LOT IN COMMON,
REMEMBER--AND IT'S NOT THAT
BAD.

NO? AT LEAST
NOBODY'S TRYING
TO MELT DOWN
YOUR STEEL SKELETON
AND USE IT FOR
SCRAP METAL--

--LIKE THAT SHYSTER
LAWYER SLATTERY
WANTS TO DO WITH ME!

ANYWAY, THANKS FOR
HELPING ME JERRY-RIG
MY RIGHT ARM BACK INTO
WORKING ORDER,
AFTER NUCLEAR PULLED
IT OUT OF ITS SOCKET.

I'M BLAD SLATTERY
DIDN'T SEE US FIGHTING
NUCLEAR, OR HE'D PROBABLY
CLAIM IT PROVES I'M THE
"PUBLIC MENACE" AND
"DANGEROUS MACHINE"
HE SAYS I--

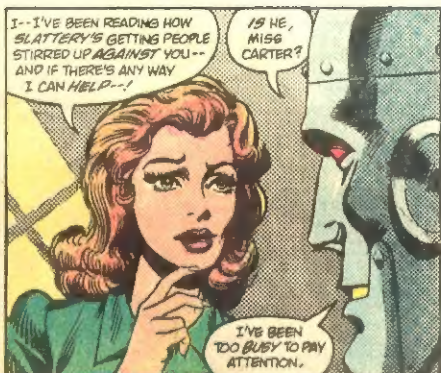
OH, HI, DR.
GRAYSON! UM--
SORRY TO BUST
IN ON YOUR LAB
THIS WAY--I
SEE YOU'VE GOT
A GUEST--!

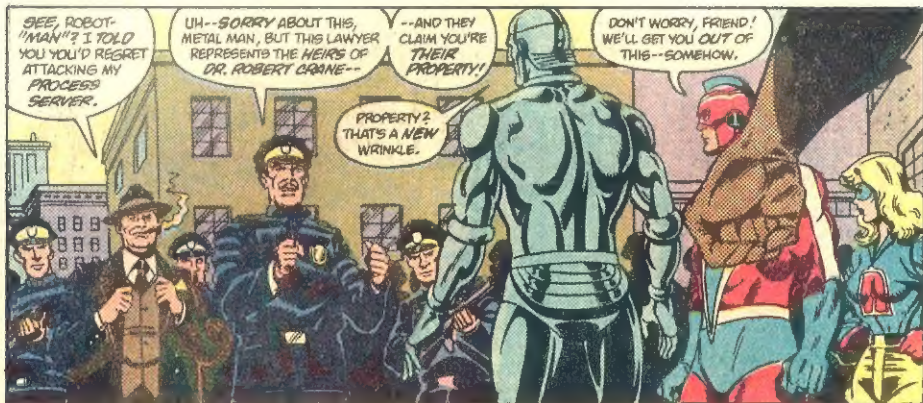
ER--HELLO, ROBOTMAN.
YOU'RE ALWAYS WELCOME,
OF COURSE.

I BELIEVE
YOU'VE MET
JOAN CARTER
ONCE OR
TWICE...

PLEASE, CHUCK--
DON'T PLAY COY
WITH ME.

I KNOW VERY WELL IT
WAS ROBOTMAN WHO
SAVED US BOTH FROM THAT
OUT-OF-CONTROL DYNAMO
A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO. (2)





SEE, ROBOT-
"MAN"? I TOLD
YOU YOU'D REGRET
ATTACKING MY
PROCESS
SERVER.

UH--SORRY ABOUT THIS,
METAL MAN, BUT THIS LAWYER
REPRESENTS THE HEIRS OF
DR. ROBERT CRANE--

--AND THEY
CLAIM YOU'RE
THEIR
PROPERTY!

DON'T WORRY, FRIEND!
WE'LL GET YOU OUT OF
THIS--SOMEHOW.

PROPERTY?
THAT'S A NEW
WRINKLE.



MAYBE SO, BUT IN
THE MEANTIME
WE'VE GOT ORDERS
TO TAKE YOU IN.

IF YOU'RE REALLY
THE HEIRS SOME FOLK
CLAIM YOU ARE, YOU'LL
COME ALONG
PEACEFULLY.

WELL?



SURE, OFFICER,
YOU'RE JUST
DOING YOUR
DUTY...!

LIKE FUN
THEY ARE!

THAT AMBULANCE-
CHASER'S PLAYING
BOTH ENDS AGAINST
THE MIDDLE.

THEY DON'T
BRING GUNS
TO COLLECT A
DEAD MAN'S
ESTATE!

JOHNNY--
DON'T--!



TOO LATE, ROBBIE!

IF THEY WANT YOU--

--THEY FIRST
GOTTA GET
PAST--

HUN!&
YOU CRAZY--

--JOHNNY QUICK!

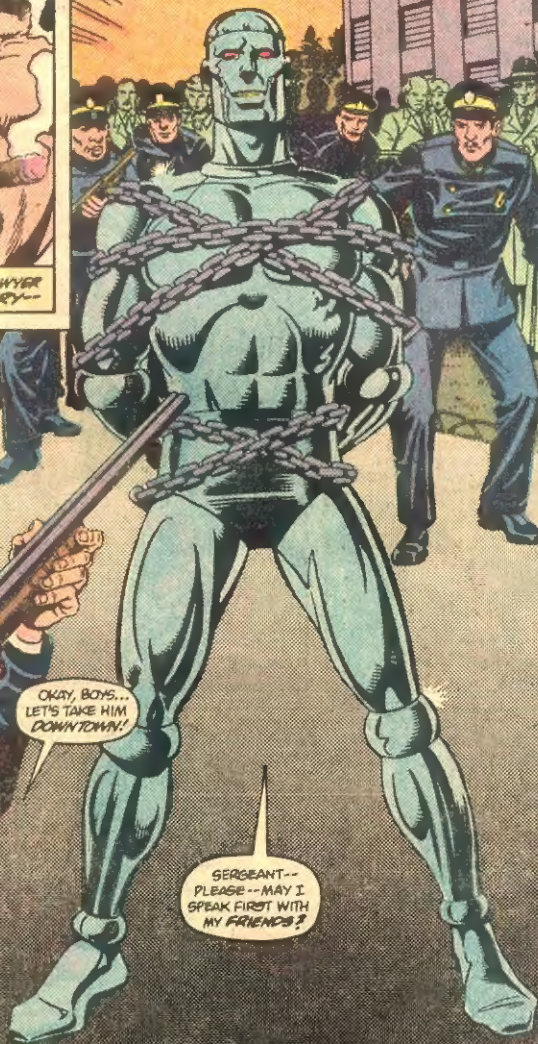


THERE ARE CONFUSED FACES IN THE GATHERED THROUNG--FACES OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE HEARD OF ROBOTMAN'S HEROISM, AS WELL AS THOSE WHO FEAR HIS INHUMAN APPEARANCE.

BUT THERE IS ONLY ONE FACE AMONG THE CROWD WHICH WEARS A SINISTER, SELF-SATISFIED SMILE--

--THE FACE OF LAWYER SAM SLATTERY--

--AS HEAVY, CLANKING CHAINS ARE DROPPED MASSIVELY OVER THE GLEAMING METAL SHELL WHICH CONTAINS THE BRAIN THAT ONCE BELONGED TO A HUMAN BEING--



OKAY, BOYS...
LET'S TAKE HIM
DOWNTOWN!

SERGEANT--
PLEASE--MAY I
SPEAK FIRST WITH
MY FRIENDS?

YEAH, SURE--BUT MAKE IT SNAPPY, BEFORE I REMEMBER
WHAT SOME OF 'EM DID TO MY BOYS AND THEIR GUNS!

THEN, AFTER A FEW HURRIED WHISPERS WITH THE ALL-STARS...



SCANT MOMENTS LATER, WHEN ONLY FOUR COSTUMED FIGURES REMAIN UPON A LAWN IN QUEEN'S...

OKAY, LADY—SUPPOSE
YOU TELL ME WHAT BIG
PLANS YOU'VE GOT FOR
HELPING ROBBIE!?

YOU HEARD
ROBOTMAN,
JOHNNY. HE
SAID HE'LL
HANDLE IT--

--AND WE'VE
GOT TO RESPECT
THAT DECISION.

BULL! I'LL RE-
MIND YOU OF THAT
WHEN THEY'RE
TURNING HIM INTO
THE GUN-TURRET
ON A SHERMAN
TANK!

I DON'T HAVE TO
TAKE THAT--FROM
YOU OR ANYBODY

YOU'LL TAKE IT,
AND LIKE IT.

GO TO BLAZES.

STOP IT, YOU
TWO! BELLE'S RIGHT,
JOHNNY! WE WERE
OUT OF LINE -- I
SEE THAT NOW.

THEN YOU STAND AROUND
WATCHING WHEN THEY BRING
ROBBIE UNDER THE HAMMER
AT SOME STEEL SCRAP MILL!

I'M GONNA GO FIGURE
AN ANGLE ON MY OWN--
ALONE!

STEEL--BELLE
--CAN'T ONE
OF YOU--?

JOHNNY'S GOT TO MAKE HIS OWN DECISION, BRANDY.

AS FOR ME--WELL, I GUESS
CATCHING FLAK GOES WITH THE
TERRITORY.

JOHNNY--

--ARE OBVIOUSLY AN
COUPLE, WHICH
IT WHAT MATTERS
RIGHT NOW.

I ONLY HOPE
ROBOTMAN GETS A
FAIR SHAKE...!

BY DAWN'S EARLY LIGHT, THE HEADLINES OF THE NATION'S NEWS-PAPERS ARE, FOR ONCE, NOT ABOUT THE WAR NEWS COMING OUT OF EUROPE, AFRICA, AND THE PACIFIC...

WASHINGTON W
Real Issue is Robot
"Influential" says

New York Chronicle
MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 1942
**Robot-Man or
Robot Monster?**

ED RO...
TO...

Comp...
too...
K...

WASHINGTON WORLD
Real Issue Is Robotmen's
"Inhumanity," Says Lawyer

Comparisons
made to
airlift

THE INCREDIBLE NEWS SWEEPS THE COUNTRY LIKE WILDFIRE--THE GENERAL PUBLIC RAPIDLY SPLITTING INTO TWO FACTIONS...

I ALWAYS SAID ONE DAY THOSE SCIENTISTS WOULD CREATE A BUNCH OF MONSTERS THAT'D KILL US ALL!

SERVES 'IM RIGHT, THAT METAL MENACE! LET ONE ROBOT GO WALKIN' AROUND FREE--AND THE NEXT THING YOU KNOW, WE'LL ALL BE OUT OF WORK!

I SAY, PUT MACHINES LIKE HIM TO WORK IN THE FACTORIES, TO FREE OUR BOYS FOR THE FIGHTING.

AND AARON BARR ONCE RAN FOR PRESIDENT--SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

BUT THIS ROBOTMAN'S A MEMBER OF THAT NEW ALL-STAR SQUADRON, AIN'T HE?

ROBOT-MAN JAILED IN

MISTER, THERE'S A WAR ON! RIGHT NOW, LOTS OF WAR JOBS ARE GOING BEGINS.

BUT HE'S REALLY HUMAN, ISN'T HE? I MEAN, HE WALKS AND TALKS AND EVERYTHING--!

SO DID THAT ROBOT AT THE WORLD'S FAIR!

WHILE, IN THE NEARBY OFFICES OF SAM SLATTERY...

SURE I DO.

...THEN YOU UNDERSTAND, MR. VINCENT, WHAT MY PROCESS SERVER MR. BANE TOLD YOU OUTSIDE? WHAT YOU'RE TO DO?

WHEN THIS TRIAL THING COMES UP, YOU WANT ME TO SWEAR I SAW THIS ROBOTMAN CREED KICK A CRIPPLED NEWS-BOY, RIGHT?

MISTER, FOR THE MONEY YOU'RE PAYIN', I'D SWEAR I SAW HIM STEAL THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE!

THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY. JUST BE CONVINCING...AND SOBER.

OH, AND I ASSUME YOU WON'T MIND BEING PAID IN CASH?

MR. SLATTERY, YOU'RE MY KIND OF PEOPLE!

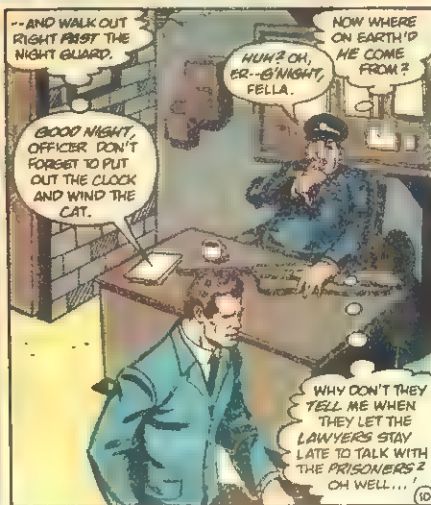
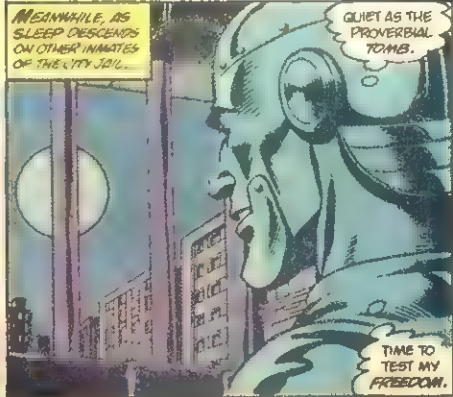
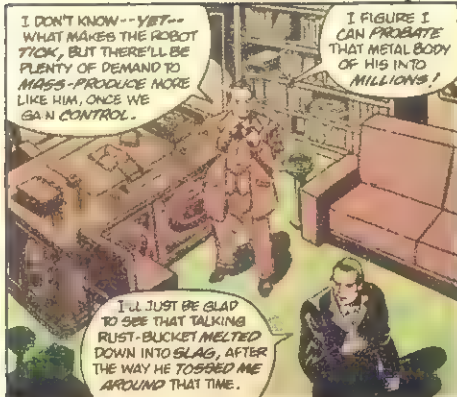
FINE. NOW GET OUT.

THINGS'RE GOIN' GREAT, HUH, MR. SLATTERY?

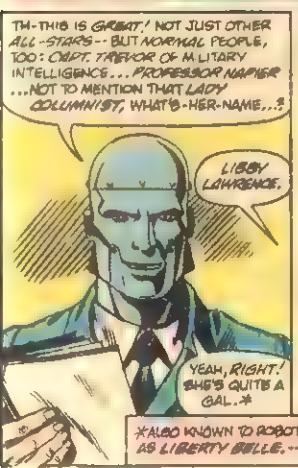
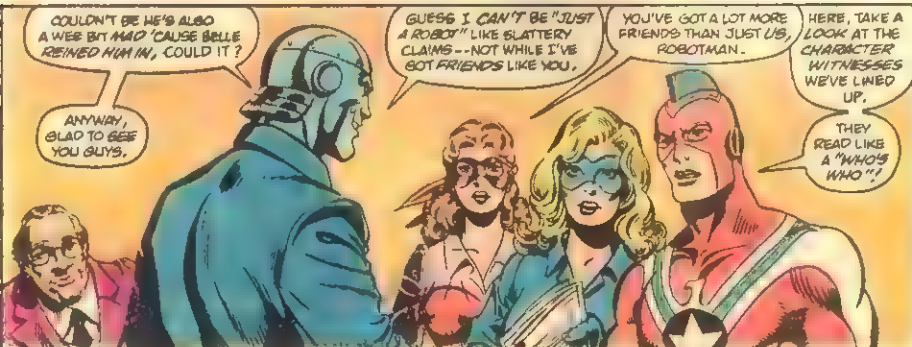
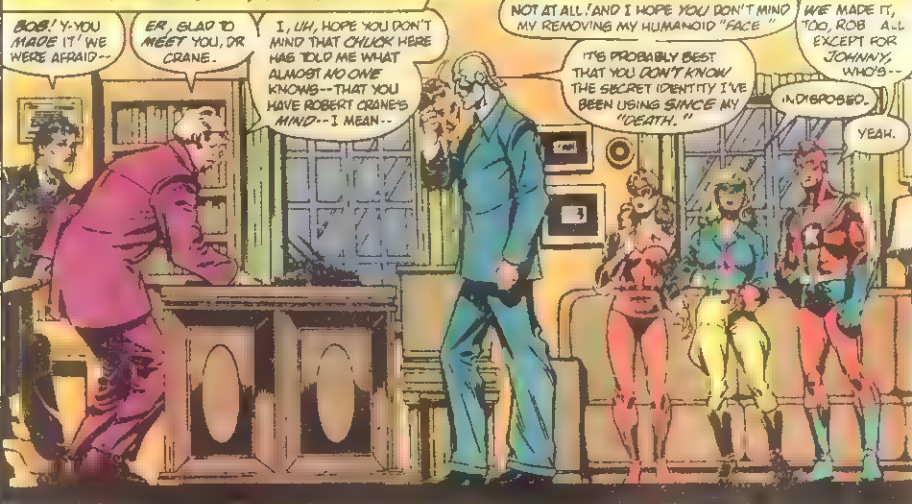
YOU REALLY LUCKED OUT, FINDIN' SOME DISTANT RELATION OF THAT DEAD CRIME GUY, SO YOU COULD TALK 'IM INTO LETTIN' YOU REPRESENT HIM.

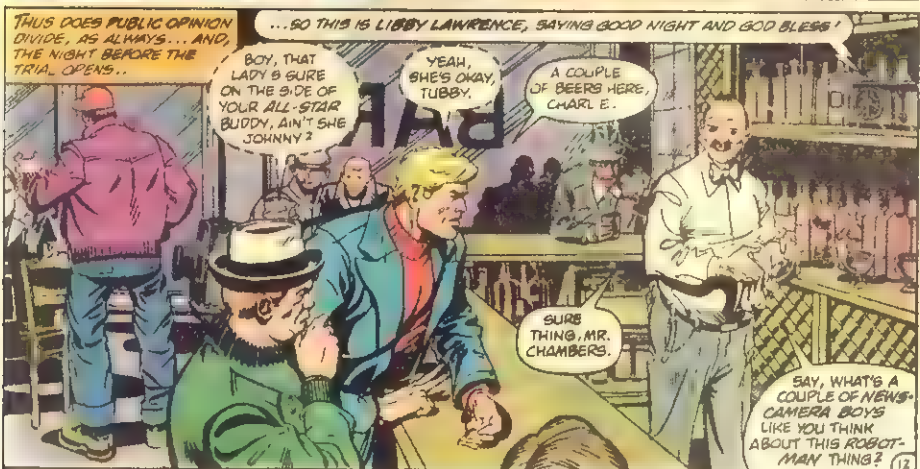
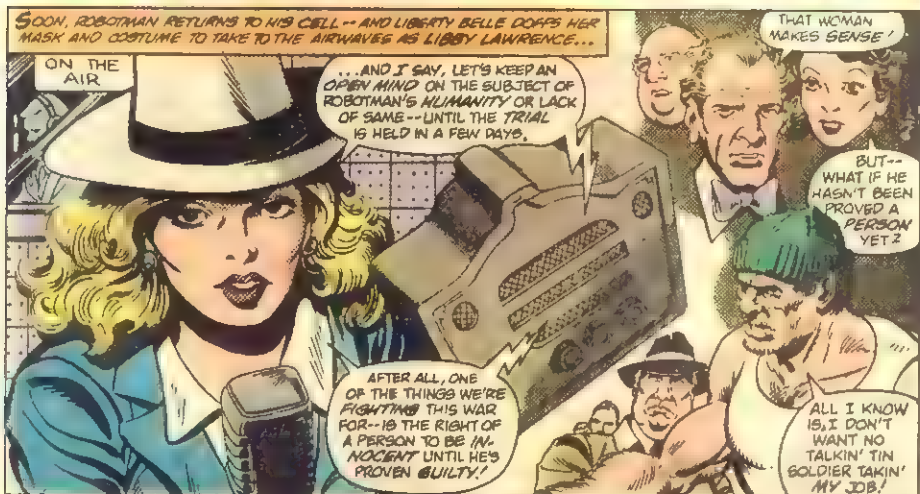
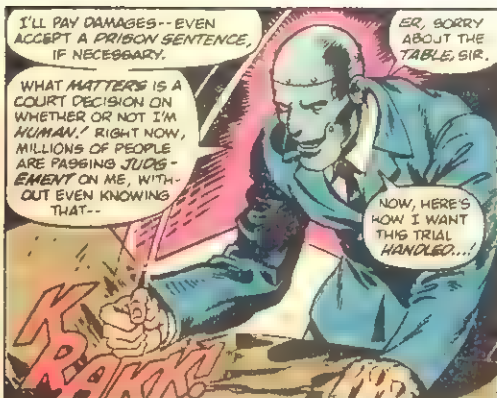
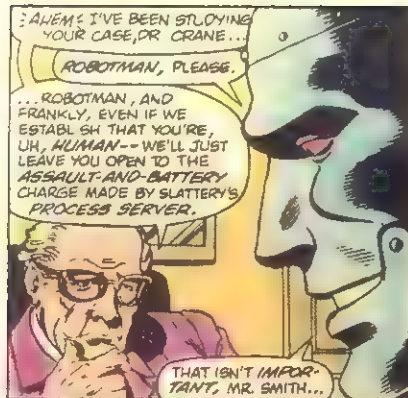
LUCK HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT, BRUTUS.

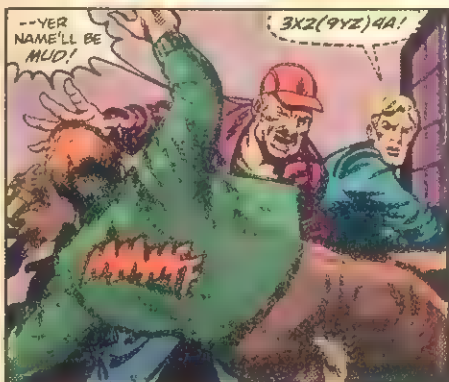
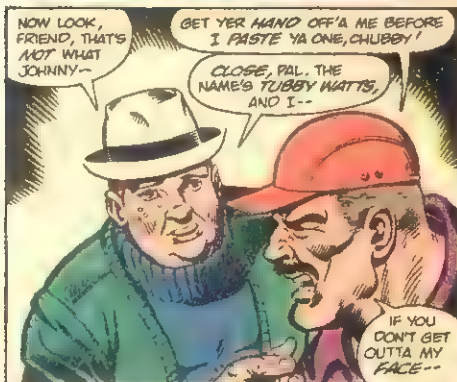
AND SINCE THE PRESIDENT HAS REFUSED TO COMMENT ON THE CASE--BAYING IT MUST BE SETTLED BY THE COURTS--I FIGURE WE'VE GOT CLEAR SLEDDING.



OFFICE SPRING ACROSS TOWN, SLOWED ONLY BY THE NECESSITY OF KEEPING TO THE SHADOWS--AND SOON, IN THE OFFICES OF JEFFERSON SMITH, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW...







SIX HUNDRED FIFTY
 AN HOUR...
 AND...
 KNOWN WITH HEART I'D GO TO

OLD BUDDY, I DIDN'T THINK
 I COULD STAND TO ATTEND
 THAT TRIAL-- BUT I JUST
 REALIZED, BACK THERE,
 THAT I'VE GOT TO!

AND, IF THE VERDICT
 GOES AGAINST
 ROBOTMAN-- WELL...



IF THE ALL-STAR SOUND-
 ROW'S TOO YELLOW TO HELP
 HIM GET AWAY-- I'LL DO IT
 ALL BY MY LONESOME--



--AND
 THEY'D
 BETTER
 NOT GET
 IN MY
 WAY!

THE WORLD DOES NOT STAND STILL DURING THESE TROUBLED DAYS: IN THE GILBERT AND MARSHALL ISLANDS, AMERICAN PLANES LAUNCH THEIR FIRST ATTACK AGAINST JAPANESE POSITIONS... EGYPT'S KING FAROUK ANNOUNCES RESISTANCE TO BRITISH PRESSURE... AND GERMAN U-BOATS CONTINUE TO SINK ALLIED SHIPPING WITHIN SIGHT OF AMERICA'S EAST COAST.

YET WITHIN A VERY FEW DAYS, THE ATTEMPTS BY BOTH SIDES
 TO BRING THINGS TO A SPEEDY HEAD FLY OFF, AND...

I JUST WANT YOU T'KNOW,
 ROBOTMAN-- YOU'RE A HERO
 TO MY KIDS, AND I DON'T LIKE
 CARTIN' YOU AROUND IN
 CHAINS LIKE YOU WAS
 AL CAPONE.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT
 IT, OFFICER. IF THIS IS
 WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE
 SOME PEOPLE FEEL
 SAFE WHEN I'M
 AROUND...

AWRIGHT,
 FOLKS-- KEEP
 BACK THERE!

SCRAP THAT
 HUNK OF JUNK
 --AND SHOOT HIM
 AT THE JAPS!

SO WHY
 AREN'T
 YOU IN THE
 ARMY, IF
 YOU'RE SO
 BIG AND
 BRAVE?

AMERICA
 NEEDS MEN--
 NOT METAL
 MONSTERS!

PUT
 ROBOTMAN
 ON THE
 TRASH HEAP!



Despite his size, Robotman
 is actually a very small man.
 He can fit in a very small
 space, and he can fit in
 any and every corner of
 the world's history.

And when it comes
 to the future...

AND IT HURTS.

SMILE ABOUT THAT
ROTTEN TOMATO, YOU
DIRTY ROBOT!

HERE... LET ME
GET THAT.

AT LEAST
I'M SURE NOW
THAT YOU'RE A
MAN, NOT
JUST A
MACHINE..

... FAR MORE OF
A MAN THAN
THOSE WHO
ACCUSE YOU

THANKS...
MISS
CARTER.

HEY,
LOOKIT!
THE DAME'S
GOT A
THING FOR
WIND-UP
TOYS!

BACK, EVERYBODY! THE COURT
BUILDING'S FULL --AND IT'S OLD
AND RICKETY ENOUGH AS IT IS!

I KNOW IT'S CRAZY-- BUT WHY DOES ROBOTMAN
REMIND ME SO MUCH OF BOB-- THE MAN I LOVED?

EVERYTHING SO
MIXED-UP...

AND THINGS
ARE LIABLE TO
GET WORSE
BEFORE THEY
GET BETTER:

ROBOTMAN--
AS I MUST
CALL YOU, SINCE
YOU'VE GIVEN NO
OTHER NAME
TO THIS COURT--

SINCE THIS TRIAL IS
WITHOUT PRECEDENT
IN MANY WAYS, WE APPRECIATE
YOUR AGREEING TO
WEAR THOSE CHAINS--
WHICH ORDINARILY WOULD
BE USED IN COURT ONLY TO
CONFINA A DANGEROUS
ANIMAL OR--ER
--MACHINE.

WHICH IS
PRECISELY WHAT
I'VE COME HERE
TO PROVE I AM
NOT, YOUR
HONOR.

THIS CASE
MAY BE WITHOUT
PRECEDENT, BUT
I'M HERE TO SEE
THAT IT BE-
COMES ONE--

-- AND THAT AN
ENLIGHTENED MAN-
KIND FINALLY ACCEPTS
THE FACT THAT THE
ROBOTS IN ITS FUTURE
WILL SERVE HIM, NOT
SEEK TO RULE OR
DESTROY OR RE-
PLACE HIM.

PLEASE ROBOTMAN...
LET YOUR ATTORNEY
ARGUE YOUR CASE.

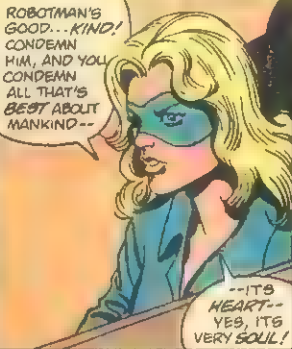
AND NOW, THE PROSE-
CUTION MAY CALL THE
FIRST WITNESS...!

WE'LL LEAVE THE PROSECUTION'S CASE MOSTLY TO YOUR OWN VIVID IMAGINATION... BUT, WHEN IT'S THE TURN OF THE DEFENSE:

...AND HE'S RISKED HIS LIFE TO SAVE US, AND AMERICA, MANY TIMES OVER! WOULD A MACHINE DO THAT?



ROBOTMAN'S GOOD... KIND! CONDEMN HIM, AND YOU CONDEMN ALL THAT'S BEST ABOUT MANKIND--



--IT'S HEART-- YES, ITS VERY SOUL!

I WEAR THIS COUNTRY'S COLORS, PROUDLY... BUT IF ROBOTMAN IS CONSIDERED NOTHING MORE THAN PROPERTY TO BE FOUGHT OVER IN A COURT OF LAW...



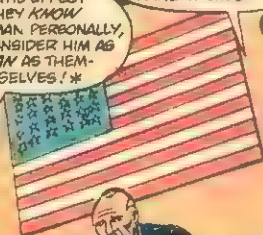
...THEN I GAVE TWO YEARS OF MY LIFE... FOR AN EMPTY DREAM!

...I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO ENTER AS EVIDENCE, YOUR HONOR, THESE AFFIDAVITS FROM SUPERMAN... HAWKMAN... WONDER WOMAN... AND OTHER COSTUMED HEROES OF UNDISPUTED HUMANITY, DESPITE THEIR GREAT POWERS...



...TO THE EFFECT THAT THEY KNOW ROBOTMAN PERSONALLY, AND CONSIDER HIM AS HUMAN AS THEMSELVES! *

I OBJECT! ALL THIS TESTIMONY FROM PEOPLE WHO HIDE BEHIND MASKS AND FAKE NAMES--!



THIS SMACKS TO ME MORE OF THE KU KLUX KLAN THAN IT DOES OF TRUE HUMANITY --OR AMERICANISM *

SUSTAINED! THE TESTIMONY OF PERSONS WHOSE TRUE IDENTITIES ARE UNKNOWN WILL NOT BE ADMITTED.

*BIT OF AN IRONY THERE, SINCE SUPERMAN IS AN ALIEN... AS IF WE HAD TO TELL YOU. --LEN.

AND, SITTING ALMOST UNNOTICED AT THE PRESS TABLE... IS JOHNNY CHAMBERS!



GOOD GLORY! IF ROBOTMAN'S DECLARED NOT HUMAN--

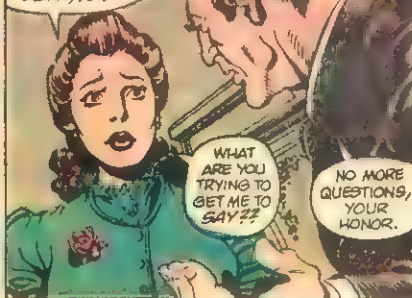
--WILL SLATTERY'S NEXT TARGET BE THE ALL-STAR SQUADRON ITSELF??

THE DEFENSE NOW CALLS TO THE STAND... DR. CHARLES GRAYSON.



...AND SO, MISS CARTER, THIS MYSTERIOUS ROBOT FIRST APPEARED AFTER YOUR FIANCÉE WAS KILLED?

YES, BUT--THERE'S NO CONNECTION BETWEEN BOB'S DEATH, AND--



WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO GET ME TO SAY??

NO MORE QUESTIONS, YOUR HONOR.

AND NOW, AS PER HIS PLAN, THE CORE OF ROBOT-MAN'S DEFENSE BEGINS...

YES, MR. SMITH, THERE IS A CONNECTION BETWEEN BOB'S DEATH AND ROBOTMAN, AS THE PROSECUTION HAS TRIED TO INSINUATE.

IF I COULD TELL MY STORY...

PLEASE DO, DR. GRAYSON.

WELL...

FIRST, I MUST SAY THAT ROBERT CRANE AND I WERE MORE THAN ASSOCIATES. HE WAS ALSO MY FRIEND... MY BEST FRIEND.

ON THE NIGHT OF OCTOBER 31, 1941, WE WERE ABOUT TO REALIZE HIS GREATEST DREAM AS A SCIENTIST...

"...WHEN...

THE DOOR-BELL! ? NOW WHO--?

UH-OH! I'LL BET IT'S JOAN.

RRING

WE HAD A DINNER DATE...AND I FORGOT ABOUT IT.

JOAN'S A WONDERFUL, LEVEL-HEADED GIRL.

BUT SHE'S HUMAN, TOO.

SHE LOST HER TEMPER, AND STORMED OUT.

"WE'D BARELY HEARD HER ROADSTER SQUEAL AWAY WHEN SUDDENLY--

HUH? WHAT DO YOU HOODLUM TYPES WANT HERE?

OKAY, CRANE--YOU TOO, MAC--GET THOSE HANDS UP FAST!

WORD'S OUT YOU'RE WORKING ON SOME NEW INVENTION, CRANE--ONE WORTH BEAUCOUP BUCKS--AND WE WANT IT!

HEY--THAT IT, OVER BEHIND THAT SCREEN?

KEEP AWAY FROM THERE, YOU DIRTY--

BAMN

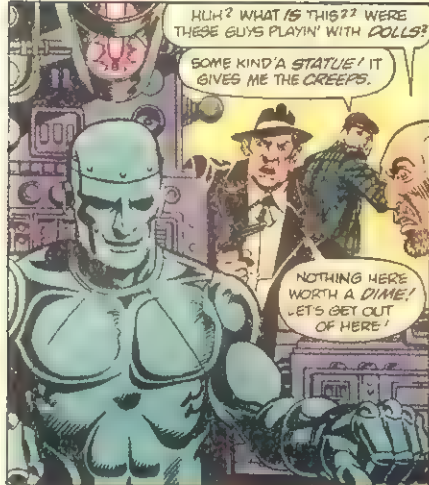
BOB!

Y-YOU'VE KILLED HIM! I'LL--UHHH!

YER LUCKY YA DON'T GET THE SAME MEDICINE, BOY-O!

WHAP

NOW LET'S SEE WHAT THE DOC WAS SO ANXIOUS TO HIDE.



HUH? WHAT IS THIS?? WERE THESE GUYS PLAYIN' WITH DOLLS?

SOME KIND'A STATUE! IT GIVES ME THE CREEPS.

NOTHING WERE WORTH A DIME! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!



"MOMENTS AFTER THEY FLED, I CRAWLED PAINFULLY TO WHERE ONE OF THE MOST BRILLIANT MEN I'VE EVER KNOWN... LAY NEAR DEATH...

BOB--NO! YOU CAN'T DIE! I-- I WON'T LET YOU!

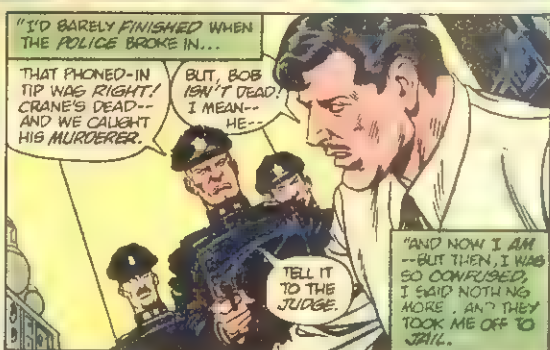


I'VE GOT IT!

THE ROBOT!



"FOR YEARS, WE'D BEEN TRYING TO PERFECT A MECHANICAL BODY WHICH COULD KEEP ALIVE A HUMAN BRAIN WHOSE OWNER HAD DIED...



"I'D BARELY FINISHED WHEN THE POLICE BROKE IN...

THAT PHONED-IN TIP WAS RIGHT! CRANE'S DEAD-- AND WE CAUGHT HIS MURDERER.

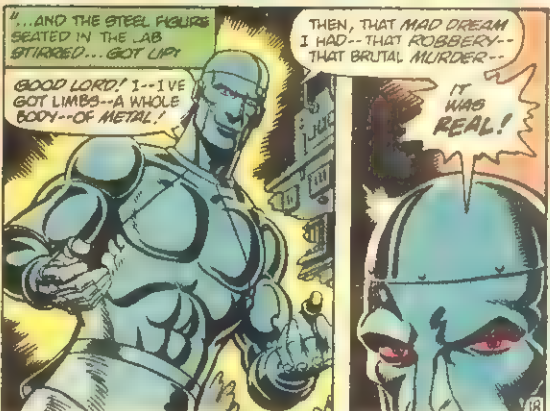
BUT, BOB ISN'T DEAD! I MEAN-- HE--

TELL IT TO THE JUDGE.

"AND NOW I AM --BUT THEN, I WAS SO CONFUSED, I SAID NOTHING MORE. AN' THEY TOOK ME OFF TO JAIL...



"SOME TIME LATER, SUNLIGHT STRUCK THE ROBOT'S OCULAR LENS...



"...AND THE STEEL FIGURE SEATED IN THE LAB STIRRED... GOT UP!

GOOD LORD! I--I'VE GOT LIMBS--A WHOLE BODY--OF METAL!

THEN, THAT MAD DREAM I HAD-- THAT ROBBERY-- THAT BRUTAL MURDER--

IT WAS REAL!

BUT NEVER, I'M SURE, IN BOB CRANE'S WILDEST DREAMS, DID HE SUSPECT THE FIRST BRAIN THUS TRANSPLANTED WOULD BE-- HIS OWN!

"THAT'S WHEN HE
WENT INTO OF
MUTTY HIMSELF
--SMASHING UP
THE CAR WITH
HIS OWN FISTS
SH--"

"--THAT IT WOULD
TAKE US YEARS
TO DUPLICATE THE
EXACT EXPERIMENT
WHICH ENABLED US
TO ELECTRICALLY
FUSE BOB'S BRAIN
WITH A METAL
BODY TO CREATE--
ROBOTMAN."

I WON'T BE
TRAPPED INSIDE
THIS-- THIS
STEEL SHELL!

I
WON'T!!

"BUT EVEN IN HIS SHOCK, HE QUICKLY
REALIZED THAT HE HAD TO BE TRAPPED
THERE-- PROBABLY FOREVER

"HE WAS STILL STANDING THERE,
STUDYING THE DAMAGE HE'D
WROUGHT, WHEN--"

WHAT--?
OH, IT'S JUST
THE NEWSBOY--
SLIDING THE MORNING
PAPER UNDER THE
DOOR. I WONDER IF--

THIS IS-- INCREDIBLE! THEY SURE
DIDN'T WASTE MUCH TIME FINDING
SOMEONE TO PIN MY DEATH ON--
CHUCK!

BUT I'M ALIVE--
ALIVE!

NEW YORK
Prize-winning Scientist
Murdered in Queens

Dr. Robert Crane Dead
Last Laboratory
Accused Of Murder
Queens, New York

Like
a lot
of
other
people
who
have
been
murdered
in
Queens,
New York

"WHAT BOB DIDN'T
KNOW WAS THAT IT
HAD ACTUALLY BEEN
TWO NIGHTS SINCE
HIS DEATH

"THE REST OF THE
MORNING EVEN MORE
THAN THIS IS
REALLY BOB'S
TO TELL

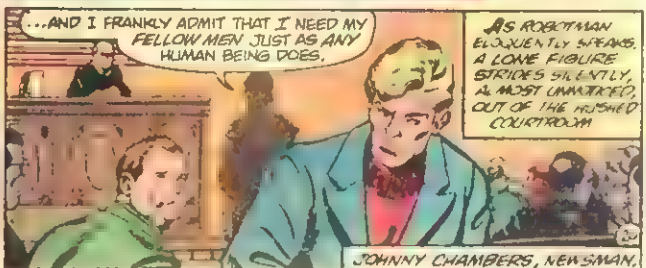
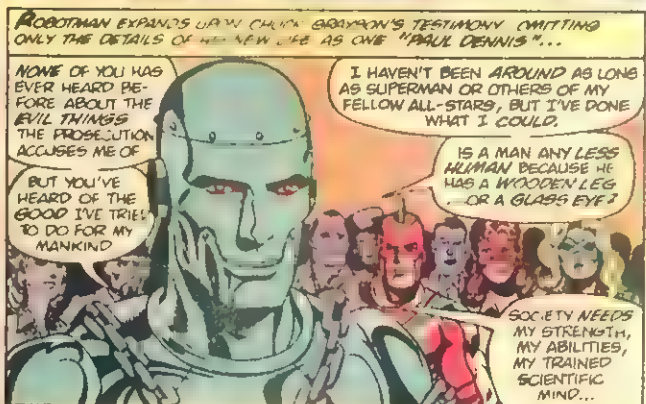
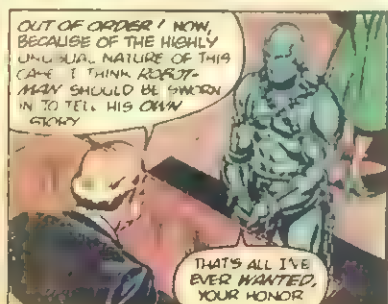
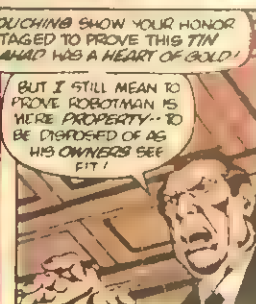
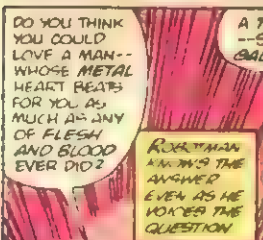
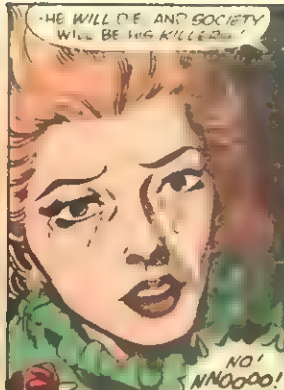
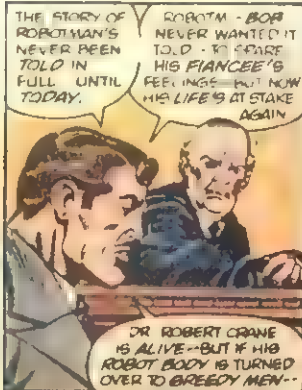
"AND BROUGHT THEM
TO JUSTICE

WHAT
IN
THE--?

YOU CAN'T
ESCAPE ME,
BOYS--

--ANY MORE THAN
YOU COULD YOUR
CONSCENCES,
IF YOU HAD
ANY!

"BUT THE RECORD SHOWS
THAT WITHIN 24 HOURS, HE
HAD TRACKED DOWN HIS
MURDERERS, OUTRAGED
THEIR SPEEDING CAR...



MOMENTS LATER, WITHOUT WARNING--

WH WHAT'S
THAT
SOUND??

THE CEILING'S
STARTING TO COLLAPSE!
THIS OLD PLACE WASN'T
MEANT TO HOLD SUCH
A CROWD--!

GET OUT OF
MY WAY! I'LL
BE KILLED!!

MY HEART--!

FIREBRAND!
STEEL! WE'VE
GOT TO DO
SOMETHING!

MY
FLAMES'D
ONLY MAKE
THINGS
WORSE,
AND--
OH NO!

LOOK OUT! THE METAL
MONSTER'S LOOSE!

NO CHOICE!
GOT TO BREAK
FREE!

WHO CARES, LADY?
JUST LEAVE OUTTA
HERE!

STEEL'S
DOWN! SOME-
THING STRUCK
HIS HEAD!

IN
GOD'S NAME--
SOMEBODY
HELP!

BELLE! BRANDY!
GET COMMANDER
STEEL AND ANY
OTHER WOUNDED
TO SAFETY!

IF I CAN HOLD
THIS SECTION OF
WALL UP, IT'LL
DELAY THE WHOLE
BUILDING'S
COLLAPSE--I
HOPE!

Will do!
THEN WE'LL
BE BACK!

NO! WHAT-
EVER YOU DO
--STAY OUT-
SIDE!

AND DON'T WORRY
ABOUT SLATTERY! I'LL
TAKE CARE OF HIM!



DONE ALL I CAN HERE! NOW TO--
HUH? WHO'RE YOU?

I'M A
DOCTOR! THIS
MAN'S SUFFERED
A HEART
ATTACK.

WE'VE
GOT TO
GET AN
AMBULANCE!

NO TIME
FOR THAT...



I'M TAKING YOU BOTH OUT OF HERE--
IN THE PROVERBIAL NICK, IT SEEMS.

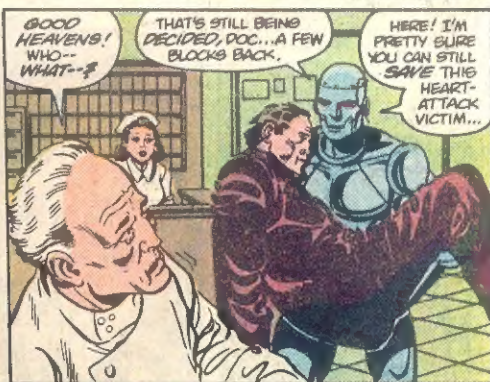
THE ROBOT--
IT'S SETTING
AWAY!

DON'T SHOOT! HE'S
TRYING TO SAVE
SLATTERY'S LIFE!



HADN'T MEANT TO REVEAL
MY TRUE STRENGTH--
OR HOW EASY IT'D BE
TO SNAP THOSE CHAINS.

COULDN'T
WORRY ABOUT
THAT, THOUGH,
WITH HUMAN
LIVES AT
STAKE.



GOOD
HEAVENS!
WHO--
WHAT--?

THAT'S STILL BEING
DECIDED, DOC... A FEW
BLOCKS BACK.

HERE! I'M
PRETTY SURE
YOU CAN STILL
SAVE THIS
HEART-
ATTACK
VICTIM...



...BUT I'VE
GOT TO GET
CRACKING!

MIGHT AS WELL
PLAY "FACE THE
MUSIC." PEOPLE
WILL FEAR ME
NOW-- MORE
THAN EVER!



HOLD IT! THEY'RE
NOT HOWLING FOR
MY BLOOD THIS
TIME! THEY'RE--
CHEERING!

LOOK!
THERE
HE IS!



HOORAY

I-- I
CAN'T
BELIEVE
IT!

SO HOW
COME YOU'RE
TOTING ME AROUND,
STEEL?

WHO
ELSE COULD
LIFT YOU,
CHUM?



...AND SINCE TO RISK
ONE'S WHOLE EXIST-
ENCE TO SAVE A
LIFE-- ESPECIALLY AN
ENEMY'S-- IS THE
VERY ESSENCE OF
WHAT BEING "HUMAN"
IS ALL ABOUT--

--I FEEL
SECURE IN
DISMISSING
THIS
CASE.

IF YOU'RE
NOT HUMAN,
ROBOTMAN--WE
NEED A NEW
DEFINITION
OF THE WORD.

THANK
YOU,
YOUR
HONOR.

I FIGURE ROB AND JOAN'LL WANT TO BE ALONE FOR A WHILE, AFTER THAT ORDEAL.

YOU DON'T LOOK TOO SURPRISED TO SEE ME IN COSTUME, BELLE.

I DON'T BLAME TH-- JOHNNY!?

I'M SURPRISED TO BE ABLE TO SEE YOU, PERIOD.

CAN'T PULL THE WOOL OVER YOUR EYES, HUH?

I COULDN'T FIGURE OUT WHY YOU STALKED OUT OF THE COURTROOM-- TILL SUDDENLY THE CEILING COLLAPSED.

THEN WHEN, AGAINST ALL ODDS, NOBODY BUT STEEL WAS HIT BY FALLING DEBRIS-- I REALIZED YOU MUST'VE KAYOED HIM--

--WHIZZING AROUND SO FAST IN THERE, NOBODY COULD SPOT YOU.

GUILTY AS CHARGED.

ER...HOPE YOU DIDN'T MIND THAT LOVE-TAP, HANK-- BUT WHEN I REALIZED THE CEILING WAS GONNA GO, I GOT THIS SUDDEN INSPIRATION THAT I WANTED TO SEE ROBBIE REALLY SHINE...

FORGET IT, JOHNNY. I'M JUST IMPRESSED BELLE FIGURED IT OUT BEFORE I DID!

WHAT SAY WE GRAB A BITE TO EAT, PEOPLE?

UH, PARDON ME, PLEASE. MY NAME IS DR. HENRY KING, PSYCHIATRIST... AND I'D LIKE TO ASK A FAVOR OF Y--

SORRY, SIR. MAYBE ANOTHER DAY, WHEN WE'RE NOT SO BUSHED.

YOU CAN REACH US BY PUTTING AN AD IN THE PAPER.

AS THE COSTUMED QUARTET DEPARTS, THE ODD LITTLE MAN LOSES HIS AFFABLE SMILE, HIS DIFFIDENT MANNER...

THE NEXT TIME I CALL YOU, ALL-STARS, I SHALL HARDLY NEED TO TAKE OUT AN ADVERTISEMENT.

RATHER, I SHALL DEFEAT YOU ALL WITH BUT A MOMENT'S THOUGHT... THE MEREST WHIM...

... AFTER THE ERSTWHILE HEROES OF THE JUSTICE SOCIETY HAVE FELT THE MATCH-LESS CEREBRAL POWER OF THE MAN THEY SHALL KNOW ONLY AS--

THE BRAIN WAVE!

BUT FOR BRAIN WAVE--THE JSA'S GREATEST, MOST-FOUGHT FOE OF COMICS' GOLDEN AGE--TO BATTLE THE JUSTICE SOCIETY, THOSE STALWARTS MUST FIRST RETURN TO THESE PULSE-POUNDING PAGES, RIGHT?

AND SO THEY SHALL, JUST TWO SHORT ISSUES FROM NOW!

MEANWHILE, NEXT ISSUE, YOU'LL MEET THE HOODED HERO CALLED **TRANTULA** IN THE STORY WE CALL--

VENGEANCE FROM VALHALLA!

TILL THEN --KEEP 'EM FLYING, HEAR?

ALL-STAR COMMENTS

DC COMICS, INC., 666 FIFTH AVENUE,
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10103

THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY: As we've done from time to time in the past, we thought you might get a kick out of knowing the genesis of this issue's story. "To Slay the Body Electric!"

Robotman himself first appeared in STAR-SPANGLED COMICS #8, published for May 1942 (but obviously, publishing realities being what they are, reflecting events that happened some months earlier). From the very beginning, he was a unique star in the comic-book firmament, compared to all the masked and caped humans who were cropping up in imitation of Superman and Batman—and in many ways, "Paul Dennis" was no more earthly than the Kryptonian himself.

In issue #16, published for Dec. 1942—but in our chronology, happening nearly a year earlier—a shy lawyer named "Sam Slugg" involved Robotman in events very much like those in the tale you've just read. Naturally, though, since it was a *Robotman* story, the chronicles on our earth weren't able to give quite all the details, including the involvement of the other All-Stars and Johnny Quick's little revelation at the end. (In the same manner, we figure lawyer Sam Slattery's name got garbled as well in the other transmission between Earth-Two and our own world, where the story happened only in a comic-book.)

Ever since ALL-STAR SQUADRON began, it's been our intention to include the true story of Robotman's trial for life in our little quasi-history of the World War Two years, and we've finally done it. Let us know how (or if) you liked it, okay? And who knows—maybe one of these days we'll find the time and place to publish the *original* tale, as well!

—Roy Thomas.

Dear Roy:

Enjoyed the latest ALL-STAR SQUADRON, as usual—in fact, *more* than usual. I think the characters all profited from the increased attention shown to them as characters. I hope this trend will continue, though not at the expense of a group-wide plot as was experimented with in this issue.

I've had some technical reservations with ALL-STAR SQUADRON: the frequently laconic pacing, the overwhelming chattiness of each and every character, etc., but I enjoy the book nonetheless, and I thought you might be interested in knowing why.

The "well-made" comic book, much like the "well-made" play, has fallen on hard times in the last decade. The editorial craft which used to go into writing stories with beginnings, middles, ends, comprehensible characterization, introduction of characters and explanation of their abilities, some humor, a purpose, etc., had either been standardized beyond the point of allowing the creative people any enthusiasm, or had deviated past the point at which the legitimate reasons for those conventions themselves made sense. There were "dull" comics and "experimental" comics. Many of the self-billed "masters of the genre" have attempted to put together comics which combined hard-won knowledge of a series' commercial needs with an exciting degree of experimentation. To my mind, most of these are failures.

I don't feel that way about ALL-STAR SQUADRON, however (or for that matter, ARAK or CAPTAIN CARROT), since each issue features a strong plot in and of itself (the recent "Quest" sequence in ARAK was a shining example of this), plus strong series concepts represented in *each* issue, plus characters which never become individualized enough to negate their emblematic value. I mean, I can tell Liberty Belle and Firebrand apart by the way they speak, but they both represent heroism. I

like heroes (so sue me), and I'd rather have characters who are vague enough to be representative, not specified down to the point at which their symbolic value is lost in the whitening. Steel and Robotman could use some work, I think, but the others are coming along fine.

I thought Liberty Belle's treatment of Firebrand's growing hatred for the Japanese was very well done, by the way. And for what it's worth, Belle is the only one of the five recently-appointed women leaders of super-teams (Dream Girl, Zatanna, Storm, and the Wasp being the others) that I thought was a wise choice. The others are bubbleheads of the first order.

I also get the feeling that the characterization in ALL-STAR SQUADRON is not talking down to my adult sensibilities. It does not feed me quixotic behavior leavened by psycho-babble (a la a certain mutant group I could name) or presume too much. There is new character information coming each issue; it's just that I'm not hit over the head with it. Nice.

By the way, glad to see that Carter and Shiera took the traditional approach as regards petty matrimonial legalities in the face of a conflict which one (or both) of them might not return from. It humanizes them in my eyes; and although Hawkgirl in particular is a pale shade of the 60s-80's Kubert version—almost every other super-heroine is—she's still pretty neat. Let's see more "romance for its own sake." You know how these things went during the War.

You must know by now why I have a high tolerance for "chatty" comics—like Roy's. I wish you continued success with ALL-STAR SQUADRON. By all means *keep* the Kubert covers (which are real wowzers, and reason enough for me to buy the book even if I couldn't read), and see if you can get Carmine Infantino to do a guest-spot sometime.

Dennis Perado
Ft. Lee, NJ

We'd love to, Dennis, at least partly because Carmine even worked on ALL-STAR COMICS itself back in the late 40's. But just right now, Adrian Gonzales has been taking care of things very nicely... and though he'll be relinquishing the pencilling reins to Jerry Ordway with #19, so that Jerry'll be both pencilling and inking the meg, Adrian's busy fulltime on another Thomas-scripted title called ARAK, SON OF THUNDER, where he and Alfredo Alcala are doing a bang-up job.

By the way, it might interest (and even surprise) you to know that when Roy plotted issue #13, he was totally unaware of any other team with a woman leader, current or planned. Liberty Belle just seemed like a natural to him, what with Hawkman being in the USAAF and all. Busy working on his own comics and a couple of movie scripts, Roy had sorta fallen behind on his reading of other companies' comics—and even his old buddy Gerry Conway hadn't mentioned that Zatanna was taking over the chair of the JLA. As for whether she or any of the other new chairwomen (I refuse to use the non-word "chairperson" on principle, sorry) is a "bubblehead"—well, we'll let you argue that out with their respective writers, artists, and editors, all right? We've got enough problems!

—R.T.

Dear Roy,

You seem to be moving the All-Stars toward what in the 1940's would be a radically liberal bent. My history education may be flawed, but I understand that women in the 1940's were only just being allowed (make that "lured") into the factories to help step up the war effort, à la Rosie the Riveter. I shouldn't wonder that the American military brass or even FDR himself might press for a male hero to replace Liberty Belle as leader of the Squadron. What kind of image would the sexist public see in a super-hero group led by a woman? With a role model like Liberty Belle or even Firebrand, it seems likely that women would start rallying to enlist in the fighting as well.

Another too-liberal moment in ALL-STAR SQUADRON #13 was the humanization of the enemy, the Japanese. But I commend you highly, Roy, for having done this years ago in another WWII super-hero book, THE INVADERS, in a story dealing with the disgraceful "relocation camps" set up for American citizens of Japanese ancestry. Again, since the All-Stars are home-front based, their attitudes are bound to come

into conflict with the propaganda fed by the U.S. government and the attitude of the "regular Joes." How the All-Stars meet these problems, especially the relocation camps, should make for powerful reading later.

ALL-STAR SQUADRON #13 may have been an issue to tie up loose ends, to fill in between "epics," but I found this to be the most compelling, touching, well-written and -drawn issue to date. Here's to more "offbeat" adventures!

Kevin E. Patterson
(No Address Given)

In a mag like ALL-STAR SQUADRON, Kevin, nearly every issue is offbeat in one way or another. In fact, the whole series is offbeat, it seems to us, in terms of time period, number of characters being juggled, etc. But we appreciate your comments, and hope you like future excursions as well.

—R.T.

Hey, Guys—

Wonderful, beautiful, superb! ALL-STAR SQUADRON #13 was all the above things and more! Inside art was the best I've seen since, well, since issue #5. The only bad thing about the whole book was the cover art. Joe Kubert did a *bad* job! Liberty Belle's legs look like Plastic Man's. Otherwise, keep up the good work.

Dale Westcott
8413 3rd Av. No.
Birmingham, Al. 35206

Personally, Dale, we've got to admit that we loved the cover Joe did (in conjunction with editor Len Wein) for #13—but we do admit that those legs got a bit rubbery. Nobody's perfect, not even Joe Kubert—but after starting out as a teenager nearly forty years ago, Joe's still one of the premier artists in the field, as well as (need we say it?) a personal favorite of Len's, Roy's, and just about everybody else at DC.

—R.T.

Dear Roy,

Even though I liked #13's "One Day, During the War" as much as most previous issues (and that's quite a bit!), it still introduced some trends, and continued others. I don't much care for....

Especially unnecessary was the mention on p. 3 of several heroes whom the established DC continuity places elsewhere than on Earth-2. I don't really object in Doll Man's case, since (like Plastic Man and Phantom Lady, already introduced) he had a lot of adventures that don't really fit into the Earth-X milieu into which most of the old Quality characters were unceremoniously dumped. For similar reasons I wouldn't mind seeing the Earth-2 Aquaman (whose World War Two origin and adventures clearly don't fit Arthur Curry's continuity) make an appearance. But Air Wave, Manhunter, and TNT have already been integrated into the Earth-1 continuity, and I see no reason why the already-crowded DC multiverse should be saddled with duplicate, superfluous versions of these rather dull characters. (Manhunter's case is particularly hard to explain, since the blue mask was adopted only because the first Manhunters were blue-skinned androids built by the Guardians of the Universe, who didn't exist on Earth-2. Besides, since you've already introduced several other Quality characters to Earth-2, wouldn't it be more logical to have the Earth-2 Manhunter be the policeman with the dog who appeared in POLICE COMICS with Plastic Man *et al.*?)

And I really don't see why you continue to have Al Pratt waste time with Mary James, who (from what I've seen of the old ALL-AMERICAN COMICS) treated him like dirt and well deserved her eventual departure from the strip. Bob Rozakis' previous "Whatever Happened to...?" story never established that Al would marry her—simply that he has a wife he calls Mary, which is a very common name and may even have been a diminutive for Marion Thayer, whom Al was dating in THE ATOM #36!

Rich Morrissey
55 Claudette Circle
Framingham, MA 01701

Could be, Rich. If so, hopefully you'll never learn the answer, in ALL-STAR SQUADRON (or anywhere else, while this mag is

in business). As for your comments re the two Manhunters, etc., we hope it won't disturb you to learn that there are two Manhunters on Earth-2, one from the old ADVENTURE COMICS and one from POLICE. Will they ever slug it out for the right to the name? Who knows? The Manhunter you saw in JLA and Jack Kirby's one-issue MANHUNTER revival, of course, was the Earth-One version, which may or may not be related to the Earth-Two version. Keep watching.

To repeat and expand: All DC characters existing in the early 1940's are considered a part of ALL-STAR SQUADRON continuity... and that goes as well for all Quality characters owned by DC, which is most of 'em. But it's a big wide world out there, and it'll take a long time to squeeze them all in.

So why does Roy want to do this book with a potential cast of literally dozens of characters? Because they were there, that's why!

—R.T.

Dear Roy, Adrian, and Len,

Thirteen is considered by some to be an unlucky number, but this issue destroyed that concept in my mind.

Fred deBoom
9372 Tidewater Circle
Huntington Beach, CA 92646

Ours, too.

—Roy Thomas.



THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SUPERBOY #37—The conclusion of the menace of the psychokinetic man by Paul Kupperberg and Kurt Schaffenberger. Also "You Can't Tell The Heroes Without An H Dial," by E. Nelson Bridwell, Bob Rozakis, Howard Bender, and Joe Giella.

JONAH HEX #68—The remaining duo of the band responsible for the death of Hex's fiancée comes riding for him. By Michael Fleisher, Dick Ayers and Tony De Zuniga. Cover by Adrian Gonzales and Dick Giordano.

WEIRD WAR TALES #119—THE CREATURE COMMANDOS journey to the future to seek a cure for their conditions. Story by Kanigher, art by Carrillo.

WORLD'S FINEST COMICS #287—The World's Finest Duo are at the mercy of a world gone bonkers, courtesy of Dr. Zodiac and Madam Zodiac. ROBIN and THE FLASH guest-star in this story written by Cary Burkett.

DETECTIVE COMICS #522—The Return of The Snowman by Gerry Conway and Irv Novick. Plus: Green Arrow vs. Hi-Tek by Joey Cavalieri and Trevor VonEeden.

ACTION COMICS #539—In the present, SUPERMAN is stymied in his attempts to return to the past, failing despite the aid of THE ATOM and THE FLASH. In the middle ages, SUPERMAN has been possessed by the being responsible for the Man of Steel's newest dual identity—Lord Satanis! This issue marks the return of Marv Wolfman to storytelling. Bob Rozakis and Alex Saviuk craft the AQUAMAN second feature. Called "Help! I'm A Prisoner In My Own Body!" Cover by Keith Giffen.